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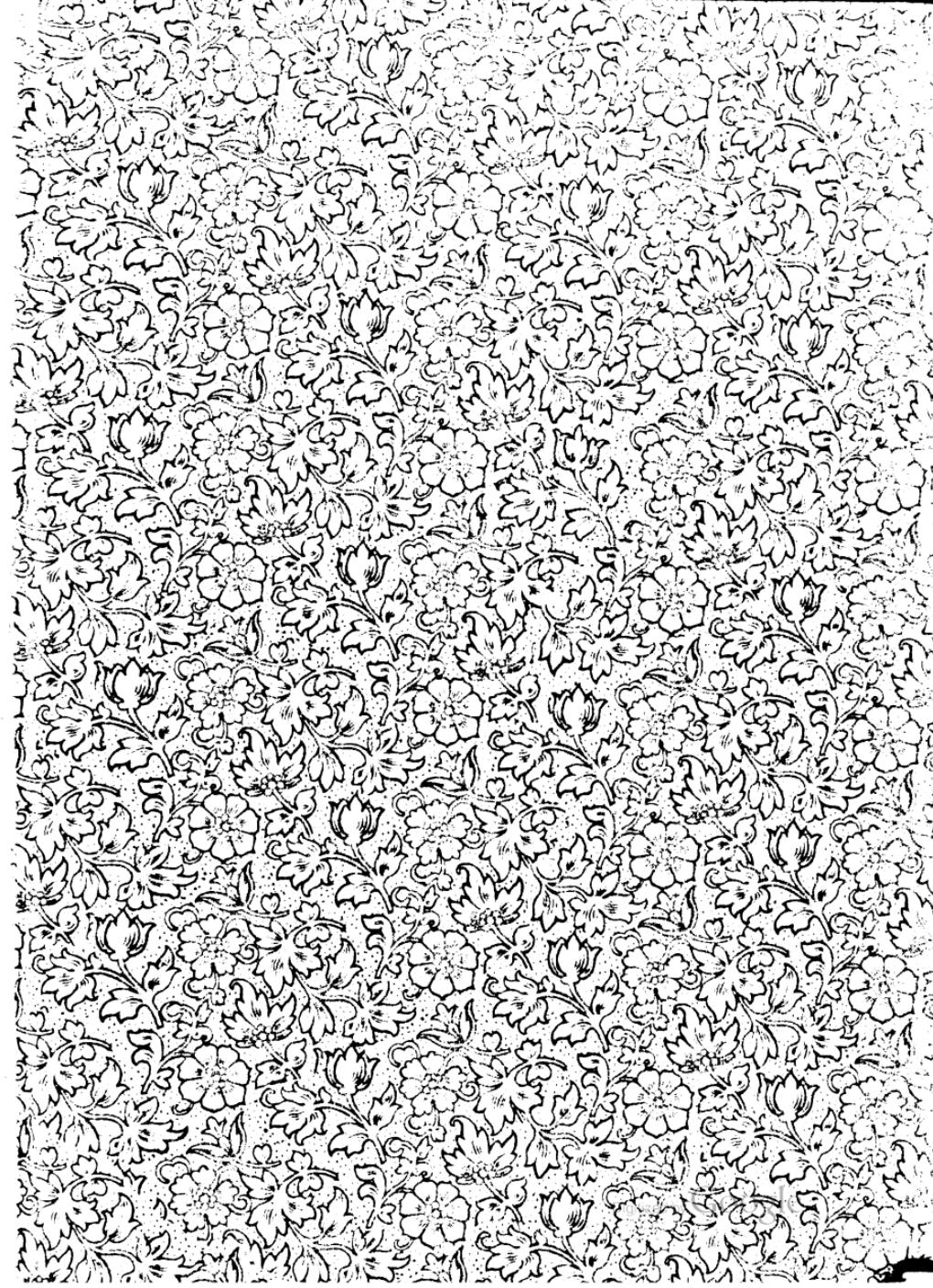
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HAVE I SOLVED IT?

HAVE I SOLVED IT?

BY

JAMES B. LEHIGH



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Stanford's land-loan scheme, impracticable by coming under the head of class legislation ; George's single-tax theory, not adapted to our commercial education ; Bellamy's ideal-life, possible only when the exchange system is abolished ; mono- and bi-metallism, having no practical rule for their government, still leave, in the opinion of the writer, the financial question an unsolved problem. And believing it to be a duty that a citizen owes to his country to advance any theory or plan that might tend towards placing the currency of the land on a definite basis, thereby placing finance in the category of the exact sciences, I respectfully submit the contents of the following pages to the public for their consideration.

J. B. L.

MODERN CIVILIZATION.



I

The merchant prince, with cleverly laid traps ; the banker, with his "lariat ;" woman, with her "dart ;" men walking alongside of you with short, sharp "dirks," ready to plunge if you show a single sign of weakness ; ministers with long, solemn faces ; priests with upheld crosses, crying, "Follow us, or be forever damned ;" salvationists with cheap instruments trying to scare the devil, not from, but into us ; labor cursing and defiant ; capital intimidating, grasping, and merciless ; are some of the daily greetings with which unfortunate man must grapple. Such, O fellow human! is our reputed civilization in the closing years of the nineteenth century. The poor suffering for necessaries, the rich thirsting for more. What is the result ? Unhappiness. Cause ? Gold. Remedy ? Sense.

II

Gold is our watchword. We awake in the morning with the hope that the day will be victorious for us. By victorious we mean that we will be successful in "strangling" some other human being. How, we care not. Prefer, of course, to do it in as smooth a manner as is consistent with what are known as the laws of the land, but "knife him" we must. Different systems with the same object in view —Gold.

The banker kindly suggests to the struggling widow to improve her premises—to depend upon him as her financial friend ; she believes him ; accompanies belief with mortgage ; season passes ; tightness of the money market returns ; widow implores for extension ; banker firm for principal (?) foreclosure follows ; some States thirty or

sixty days for redemption ; transfer completed.

The "lariating" was successful.

The merchant prince paces the floor of his establishment, satisfied only in the knowledge that his well-worked "traps," "below cost," "genuine," "guaranteed," "imported," and "closing out" are in good order, and anticipating with tigerish glee the victim's struggle when once within his clutch.

Then the being we meet on the street disguised as a friend. The shake. "Good morning, Mr. Jones; sincerely hope your family are enjoying the very best of health." Aside—I wonder if he is going to "touch" me. "Thanks Mr. Smith. The very best; I hope you can report the same." Between his teeth—What a tight grip the old miser has. Wish I could hold

my hands on his throat long enough to make him give up some of his ill-gotten stuff.

Poor Brown has been compelled to retire to his sick-bed from fever caused by hard luck in one of his "duels" with his fellow-man. Mrs. Brown :—"Oh Doctor Fifty Dollars ! is there any hope?" Brown succumbs. Mrs. B.—"Oh Rev. Mr. Ten Thousand, can I get you to say a few words for the repose of Brown's soul?" Rev. Mr. Ten Thousand looks pious, but is in truth very sad and uneasy, for he has doubts whether Brown has left enough to justify him in going to the grave in such inclement weather.

The foregoing lines are merely intended to convey the fact that all our thoughts, our acts, our very lives, depend upon the single substance, Gold. We stake our all upon it. It is the lever

which moves the Universe ; and if in unscrupulous hands, is certain to cause not only great disturbances, but actual distress to the taxpayers of the Country. And who are these taxpayers ? Is the reader one of them ? Let us see.



WHO ARE THE TAX-PAYERS?

I

"Do you see those laboring-men over there filing into that polling-booth? Well, just think of it! not a d—d one of them pays a do~~llar~~ of tax, and yet any one of their votes counts as much as mine, after I have paid out this year alone over five hundred dollars for taxes. My God! What are we coming to?" The speaker was and still is the keeper of a prominent clothing house, and his remark was not an uncommon one, as it is probably made by every merchant in the country. "My friend," the writer replied, "You told me a short time ago that you averaged an annual net profit of from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars since you began business. That being the case, pray tell me what then have you paid? It seems to me, after studying the matter over very carefully, that the

'kick' should come from the parties you 'damn' as to the injustice of your vote off-setting the vote of one who has perspired for a life-time in the cause of labor, and who has nothing to show for it save *his* existence and *your* prosperity. It seems to me that you should not be too outspoken in your condemnation; for some day the film will be removed from their eyes, and they will awake to the full realization of not only the great wrong that has been done them these many years by you shrewd money-loaners and traders, but the crowning injury in robbing them of their honest title of tax-payers.

If nature suddenly cut off the veins of mineral (and we know this has occurred in many a past mining camp) the miners, accompanied by their families, would be compelled to flee to some other point. And supposing the isolation of the

camp you are in, would not warrant you merchants from packing out your goods, what necessary value would your houses and your goods represent? What would you money-loaners and traders do, aught else, but to abandon goods, houses and realty, and fly with the miners and their accompaniment army of co-workers, locate wherever they locate, and once again, as soon as you recover your breath and get over your fright, hold your 'lariats' in readiness, put out your 'traps,' and arrogate to yourselves the usurped claim that you alone are the tax-payers. Accumulate as much as you can, but give back that stolen crown !"

II

Does Banker Seligman pay a single dollar more in taxes than Laborer Smith? Is Merchant Farwell, who is accredited with the payment of taxes to the amount of five thousand dollars, as per treasurer's receipt, entitled to any more actual credit than Laborer Smith? Banker Seligman and Merchant Farwell only pay in such proportion as their labor of distribution is to the labor of production of the actual necessities for their sustenance.

Banker Seligman admits that he has had an average annual profit of one hundred thousand dollars for the past ten years. What then, has he paid? If he has gained by accumulation, is he not ahead? Merchant Farwell began business with a capital of one hundred thousand dollars—that is, bought one hundred thousand dollars.

worth of goods. At the end of the fiscal year he shows a profit of twenty-five thousand dollars. Has he contributed anything to the carrying on of the government? Let us examine his statement. Let us run down the item of woolen pants. We trace its origin to the bleating, innocent sheep. The owner by a shearing process removes the wool, and for a consideration sells to the manufacturer; the manufacturer, after making his profit, sells to the jobber; the jobber, after making his profit, transfers to the merchant; the transportation company makes a profit for delivery; the merchant adds to the original cost insurance, clerical charges, *taxes*, rent, personal expenses and his profit. The customer buys the pants. Who pays the tax? At the end of the year the merchant records a profit of twenty-five thousand dollars. What has he paid? Does not

the treasury tax receipt he holds represent an aggregation of others' payments? We think so, and subjoin the following chapters for the thoughtful consideration of all laboring people, no matter to what department of labor they are assigned.

THE BASE OF WEALTH

I

The better to illustrate our ideas, we will suppose the United States to represent the world, and our population of sixty-two odd millions the world's inhabitants. Then, taking our products as based upon statistical reports, we find that its aggregate of value is about five billions of dollars, as can be readily observed from the annexed summary :

Grain Crop,	estimated valuation	\$2,000,000,000
Other Crops,	" "	1,000,000,000
Cattle	" "	1,000,000,000
Loss from demonetization of silver		1,000,000,000

II

The soil adapted for wheat is not available for cotton, but both are indispensable ; therefore, a fair exchange between the grower of cotton to

supply the wheat producer on the one hand, and enough wheat to sustain the cotton grower on the other, is certainly an equitable exchange, as the necessities of both are met. These products are of course perishable, and we are in consequence compelled to rely upon the soil to yield up annually sufficient necessities for our sustenance. This is as nature placed us, and from this base must we make all our estimates and calculations. As statistics show that one-third of our population are engaged in the production of perishable products, both vegetable and animal, we find that the *actual result of their labor is the basis of our wealth—not theoretically, but practically.*

OUR EXCHANGE SYSTEM

Civilization has arranged a system of exchange houses, known as mercantile houses, that were originally intended, or should have been, for the equi-distribution of the products of the soil in exchange for the products of the mind and muscle ; but the power of the strength of some minds over the average mind have succeeded in thwarting the designs of nature, and have been so successful that the actual producers themselves, nay even the world, fully believe that the real taxpayers of the country are the keepers of these exchange houses. That they have thoroughly convinced the general public that it is not the perishable products of the country that are our maintenance, but a metallic or non-perishable substance, known as the precious metal, that is the basis of our wealth.

To shatter this prevailing idea let us take a

kindergarten view as to the actual necessity of the perishable and non-perishable products. Instead of having a system of exchange houses let us begin at an imaginary base, and suppose that each of our sixty-two odd millions of inhabitants to possess life, must be an actual producer of products necessary for his sustenance, therefore they are all tillers of the soil.

We have previously stated that one-third of our population are enabled by the fertility of the soil not only to supply themselves, but also to supply the two-thirds who are not producers. This certainly shows that life can be sustained by each and all of us being actually engaged as tillers of the soil.

Now, for the producers of the non-perishable commodity known as the precious metal, that has by the strength of some minds over others,



proven conclusively to the world its greater, or by some called its intrinsic value, over the perishable products. If the tillers, say for argument, just raised a sufficient amount to sustain themselves, they having decided that it is criminal to raise more than their actual requirements, it would be very evident that those not engaged in the production of necessaries or perishable commodities would soon find that the gold in their vaults would be entirely useless as a means of sustenance; that the position of the farmers would be reversed and that the "very bright youths" engaged in making cartoons representing farmers as legislators would soon change the customs to ones representing the dilemma of the owners of exchange—houses bidding barrels of gold for loaves of bread.

We have simply endeavored to show the

relations, from a necessity standpoint, between the commodities *produced* by the tillers and the commodity *found* by the owners of exchange houses ; and to show which of the two classes is essential to the country, the one being a necessity of our creation ; the other, as far as sustenance is concerned, a superfluity.

CO-LABOR

But with civilization comes desire, the necessity of exchanging the products of one farmer for those of another, and Farmer Brown having raised enough of the necessities for his own use and exchange purposes with other farmers, he finds he has a surplus on hand that will waste if he does not utilize it in some manner. Finding that it is not necessary for all men to be engaged in the tilling of the soil, and that additional comforts can be had by a system of co-labor, he is reasonable enough to appreciate the fact that the mind which is capable of converting the timber of the forest into homes, clay into pottery, ore into metal, etc., is entitled to his co-share of the necessities of life—the actual base by nature.

Advancing civilization demonstrates that matters can be simplified by inaugurating a system of exchange houses, where the products of one

farmer's soil can be exchanged for those of another; that the products of both can be exchanged for the currency of the land, and that, in turn, for the products of the mind and muscle. By mind and muscle we mean the mind which is capable of giving instruction or amusement, and the muscle which is shaping non-perishable luxuries into something which will be of benefit to all.

Therefore, by common consent, a fair exchange between the tiller of the soil and the producer of increased comfort or instruction or amusement is certainly equitable and just; thus each doing his part is entitled to equal benefit, equal honor, and equal justice. The tiller of the soil—the base of operation—is, therefore, entitled to no greater or less benefit than the producer of his comfort, as they are co-workers in different chan-

**nels for the same object—the happiness and
comfort of each other.**

THE VALUE OF OUR WEALTH

I.

Having determined the *basis* of our wealth let us endeavor to ascertain its *value*; that is, the value from the honest monetary basis. We find from the annexed report taken from the most reliable statistics—governmental and other sources—the following perishable commodities produced in the United States, together with their market valuation:

Corn.....	\$ 754,433,451
Oats.....	222,048,486
Hay.....	408,499,565
Wheat.....	334,773,678
*Cotton.	300,000,000
*Coal.....	300,000,000
*Forestry.	300,000,000
<hr/>	
<i>Carried forward.</i>	\$2,619,755,180

<i>Brought forward</i>	.....	\$2,619,755,180
*Vegetables and Fruits	.....	100,000,000
Barley	.....	37,672,032
Buckwheat	.....	7,627,647
Rye	.....	16,721,869
Potatoes	.....	81,413,589
Tobacco	.....	43,666,665
*Wool	.....	26,000,000
*Cattle	.....	1,000,000,000
*Miscellaneous]	.....	67,143,018
<hr/>		
Total	.....	\$4,000,000,000
Add 25 per cent. for loss from demonetization of silver	.....	1,000,000,000
<hr/>		
Grand Total	.....	\$5,000,000,000

* Estimated.

The results show, of the above statistics, that the market valuation of the perishable commodities produced [in] the United States aggre-

ates about five billions of dollars, or a *per capita* valuation of about eighty dollars. And it is the result of this yield that is the direct maintenance of our government and the source of all its wealth.

II

The perishable products being the base of our wealth, should then by this line of reasoning represent our basis of values, and, accordingly, our circulating medium should necessarily be based upon the value of our perishable products.

Financiers say that supply and demand regulate prices. Do we not depend upon those laws? Is not our *per capita* of eighty dollars based upon the market prices of the perishable products?

Financiers cannot dispute the stability of our

crops, for it makes but little difference whether they go back to the first years of the century or to the past decade, they will find a very immaterial variation. Why, then, should we have a circulating medium representing only twenty dollars *per capita* instead of eighty dollars *per capita*, the actual value of our products based upon the financiers' own laws of supply and demand? Surely there must be something wrong with our financial system, particularly where, in the midst of plenty (as far as harvests go), there is so much suffering and unhappiness among the people.

III

Placing no value whatsoever upon the products of the mind and muscle, statistics prove that the value of products to the amount of

eighty dollars *per capita* is annually consumed, and consequently destroyed, by each person accredited with a stomach.

We have shown that one-third of the population must raise an average product valued at two hundred and forty (240) dollars, market value, of necessities, to sustain the entire population. They must produce a *bona fide* two hundred and forty (240) dollars worth of necessities, to receive eighty (80) dollars worth of non-perishable luxuries. In other words, the two-thirds engaged in mind and muscle products must receive their *pro-rata* of the two hundred and forty (240) dollars worth of necessities raised by the tiller, while the latter has only his one-third share, or eighty dollars.

The average farmer's annual balance sheet would read as follows :

Value of products.....	\$240
His own requirements.....	80
<hr/>	
Balance for distribution.....	\$160

The farmer, to support his co-laborers engaged in the product of the mind or muscle, must patronize them to the extent of one hundred and sixty (160) dollars *per annum* in order to cause an equal distribution of the two hundred and forty (240) dollars between the soil, mind, and muscle laborers. If he does not exchange his surplus for the products of the mind and muscle, he abuses his trust, and in consequence compels his co-laborer to join him in tilling, to obtain the necessities for sustenance.

IV

Estimated commercial wealth of the
United States.....\$80,000,000,000

Estimated assessable wealth of the United
States..... 20,000,000,000

Maximum per capita of circulation if all our money
were in circulation, *twenty-four dollars.*

Estimated per capita of circulation by hoarding and
Wall street "corners," *six dollars.*

Six dollars per capita makes money worth from twenty
to fifty per cent. per annum, according to the necessities
of a co-laborer.

Twenty-four dollars per capita averages twelve per
cent. per annum.

Eighty dollars per capita (the value of our necessary
annual product) reduces money to three per cent. per
annum, and increases proportionately the value of the
labor of the soil, mind, and muscle tax-payers, removes
the possibility of Wall street "corners," thereby giving
to a humble co-laborer, who is not skilled in the art of
barter or exchange, a reasonable right to enjoy the
glories and wonders of creation.

GOLD

SPEEDY RELIEF

OUR PER CAPITA

I

The basis of our wealth being, therefore, established, and the real tax-payers of the country being determined, the question naturally arises as to whether there is not something wrong in a system where the precious metal is the sole desideratum of life, and where the tiller, the workman, the instructor, and the other co-workers are weighed only by the single standard of the amount of the metal they have in hand.

They—the larger holders of the precious metal—tell us with a knowing wink that unless we do so and so, an awful financial calamity will befall us ; that there is great danger that bankers Brown, Hirsch and others, regarded as great financiers, may withdraw their gold from the market, and put it into a vault, securely lock it up, and ask us what shall we do then ? News-

papers controlled by these shrewd financiers warn us to be careful not to antagonize these great men. Their agents commingle with the mob, shake their heads with dire misgivings, and kindly inform us who are already at the edge of the financial abyss, that they, the agents, are dubious as to whether anything can now prevent the expected collapse of the world, but believe that we might live a little while longer if we demonetize one-half of our metallic currency. "Grant it, quick," cry the mob with simultaneous unanimity.

The financiers, as a rule, make few mistakes in their judgment of men. Too shrewd are they not to know the power of the Chief Executive, and they are as exacting of him as they are of the mob. In critical times, when their financial thrones are jeopardized, they expect him to

address the politely called "constituency," and warn the long-eared, open-mouthed gentry not to tamper with this important subject; although this same Executive may once have been a policeman, but fate—cruel I do not hesitate to add—placed him in a position to throttle us.

If we act as cowardly in the future as we have in the past, we shall submit to their extra exorbitant demand, and allow them to tighten our already painful fetters. If, on the other hand, we tell these shrewd financiers that they can take their gold and with it jump into the sea—that neither it nor they will be missed—we shall have decided a very knotty problem, and have gained our first point toward the true civilization of our world. We shall begin a system of existence that will be Utopian in the extreme; that will give to those now living a certificate

entitling them to breathe of the pure air ; to exist, not by the sufferance of any human being, but by the right of one's creation. We shall then not be compelled to live, as at present, at war with one another—engaged in a duel to the death for existence ; our children's manhood and womanhood will not depend entirely upon the amount of non-perishable product they possess, but upon their right to share and share alike in the products of the soil, which is theirs, co-equal with all by Nature's desire, but thwarted only by the greed of avaricious mankind.

II

You then must be anarchically inclined ? Not at all—directly the opposite ; for we would not destroy, if power was given us, the existing state of affairs save only that which is anarchical, the

power of a few to create at their pleasure the oft-repeating panics, better called the weakening of the weak, the strengthening of the strong.

How would you go about it? We would take at present, or until such time as our precious metals reach a parity with our products, the judgment of the founders of our government, and live religiously up to the provisions of the Constitution which treats of the liberty of the people. We would prefer the judgment of men who had no other thought than the welfare of the whole; their system of finance, being based upon a commodity of exchange that had been in existence through all known ages. The honesty of their intent and purpose no one can question. They had no Wall or Downing street to cater to, and did not seem from their acts to believe that

the sole object of life was to corral the metallic substance.

WE WOULD DEMAND AS THE FIRST AND MOST SPEEDY STEP FOR OUR RELIEF, AND THE PREVENTION OF ANARCHY, THE IMMEDIATE RESTORATION TO ITS CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT, THE FREE AND UNLIMITED COINAGE OF SILVER BULLION. THE GRANDEST RESULT FROM SUCH RESTORATION BEING THE REDUCTION BY NEARLY FIFTY PER CENT. FROM THE HANDS OF A FEW THE POWER TO ENSLAVE THE MANY.

We would follow the restoration of silver with a manifesto from the tax-payers to the keepers of exchange houses, that to act any longer in the capacity of custodians of the products of the soil, mind and muscle, they must never again be caught in an attempt to enslave mankind by taking advantage of our trust-

fulness in causing a false measurement of values to prevail.

The above-mentioned manifesto should also contain a few suggestions as to the duties of these custodians who, by wit or otherwise, have succeeded in amassing huge boulders of the metallic substance. Accumulation cannot be prevented, and millionaires are a natural result of a barter system. They can, however, be a necessity to the country and tax-payers *de facto*, in the same proportion as their labor of distribution is to the labor of production, by simply spending their surplus in any manner they deem best for their own comfort and amusement. The only possible way they can become a detriment to the community is by hoarding what is known as the currency of the land, thereby keeping the same from circulating, and practically destroying the



amount of their hoarding from the issued *per capita* to the circulating *per capita*, occasioned by their act.

Though they may be the nominal possessors of property valued at millions, and enjoy fabulous incomes, no one could begrudge them their enjoyment and pleasure if they but do their simple duty by distribution. Hoarding only should be regarded as the cardinal crime, and known misers should by some legal process be gently relieved of their burden.

III

If, then, you place such a high valuation on the products of the soil, and so little on gold, how do you account for gold being worth so much more than the products? Again: if the farmers get their price for their products, which is your

per capita, what objection can they possibly have? Lastly: if the necessaries of life possess such a valuation as you state, why do the farmers exchange so much for so little in return; or, putting it in your language, why are they eager to exchange so much of the perishable products for so little of the non-perishable gold? We answer on the grounds of what the world terms shrewd financing, or what the sporting fraternity denominates, "flim-flamming." If all our crops were harvested at the same time, and delivered on a certain date, we should unquestionably be compelled to pay the value of the crops in full, which, saying aggregates five billions of dollars, we certainly would require that amount in currency to pay for it. Now, if financiers can by a system of "flim-flamming," make one dollar take the place of four dollars, they satisfy the producer optically,

but not practically. If these payments were to be made once a year, the buyers would have to come prepared with the eighty dollars *per capita*, and the tillers of the soil would be our disbursing agents, instead of, as now, the keepers of exchange houses. These payments being made annually, we would be compelled to have our currency intact every pay-day, and the loss of a single dollar, or its equivalent, would naturally be subtracted from the pro rata of actual distribution. Now, if financiers can lessen the medium of exchange by some hocus-pocus of legislation, thereby lessening the *per capita* amount of the circulating medium to the *per capita* amount of production, they *increase* the demand value of the *per capita* of currency in the same proportion as the *per capita* of production *decreases* in demand value.

The effect of such tricky legislation is principally felt by the "mind and muscle" producers, and would have the same effect upon them if the tillers of the soil should decide to hoard instead of distribute.

Property having no natural value, simply an artificial one, would place these co-workers in a peculiar dilemma; they could not realize on their artificial property, owing to the scarcity of exchange certificates; and the necessities of life are denied them because some of their co-workers have proved recreant to their trust by hoarding instead of distributing, thereby causing a panic among the toilers.

The co-workers are again at sea financially. Humanity becomes enraged and consequently unhappy, and is once more compelled to resort to criminality in deed and feeling to obtain the

necessaries. Our world becomes chaotic, as described in the opening chapter. Pandemonium again seizes us ; merchants put out their "traps" ; bankers hold their "lariats" in readiness woman, her "dart" ; man, his "dirk." Darkness reigns. Ministers re-appear with solemn faces ; priests resume their cries ; salvationists again confront us, and we are no longer worthy to leave the legacy of life to our successors.

PRACTICAL POLITICS

I

In the foregoing chapters we have endeavored to prove that every laborer is a tax-payer, and as such must know that his sovereignty stands or falls by his own activity or apathy. Therefore, we would respectfully submit to the public some similar scheme to the following as a basis for every citizen of the land taking an interest in his own and his country's welfare.

II

The defeat of the federal election measure : the impracticability of Civil Service reform, certainly its un-Americanism ; the recognized evils resulting from the spoils system—all combine to call for suggestions in the direction of the improvement of our election methods. An improvement that will recognize the main provisions of

the federal election measure in its demand for the rule of the majority *de facto*, and in consequence result in a full, free vote; one that also will aid in enforcing civil service reform ideas by obtaining the best possible service, and, lastly, will reward politicians who may advance ideas that will contain sufficient merit to satisfy the majority of voters.

While of course it is the popular thing to place the blame of the existing evils on the politicians and those favoring the spoils system, let us see whether the charge is altogether correct, and whether the great evil which assumes the proportions of nothing more nor less than criminal neglect, does not lie almost entirely with what are known as the "better classes." Nearly all will admit that the principles outlined by the founders of the republic, if strictly

adhered to by all citizens, would have given us an almost perfect form of government ; therefore, if those principles could be enforced, that is, by a plan compelling citizens to do their simple duty, it would be a great boon to our country, and an advance step in our democratic system of government. For the faithful consideration of the student of political economy and to the patriotic American tax-payer, we submit the following as a possible remedy for the existing situation :—

FIRST—In local and State elections adopt the plan of a regular election-day, on which day all offices shall be filled ; as, for instance, the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November, thus respecting the constitutional election day. On that day let all Municipal, County, District, and State offices be filled.

SECOND—Adopt a system of a regular “ pri-

mary" day, say about one month prior to the election day, which would be practicable in all but presidential elections. An additional election day every fourth year would not be a very great burden.

THIRD—Make both the primary and election days legal holidays.

FOURTH—Make voting at both the primaries and elections compulsory.

FIFTH—Let the State prescribe such laws as will enforce voting, by heavy fines or imprisonment, with, of course, the usual allowances for sickness or other justifiable causes.

SIXTH—Adopt the registration system—every citizen in every county being compelled to register as the main requirement for his citizenship.

SEVENTH—Let aliens doing business in this country, who have resided here long enough to

acquire citizenship, have imposed upon them a heavy personal tax, regulated by their income.

EIGHTH—Consider non-registered persons as aliens, and treat them accordingly.

NINTH—Let representation in Congress be based upon the actual voting population as per registration.

TENTH—Adopt the secret ballot system, recognizing the legality of a blank ballot.

ELEVENTH—Permit any citizen to attend any party primary, and to cast his ballot in blank, or in any other manner he may see fit.

The main object of these suggestions is to compel citizens to do their duty towards the republic. If patriotism is so laggard in their systems that harsh methods must be resorted to in order to compel them to awake to the evils of the existing situation, then let us adopt such meas-

ures. Let us look at the situation. A solid vote of the citizens means a majority rule, which is the basis of our government. A solid vote of the citizens at their respective primaries means the choosing of delegates that are selected by a majority of the citizens. The result of such compulsory laws can be easily foretold. Reputable men going *en masse* to their respective political primaries would easily outnumber the other element, and thereby completely squelch at one fell blow the obnoxious element that has so long controlled the key to the political situation.

Under the present system, having the choice of attending the primaries or of staying at home, reputable men are loth to come into contact with what is known as the rough element ; and the latter class, knowing the weakness of reputable men in wishing to avoid unpleasant associations,

are encouraged to adopt terrorizing and under-handed methods. If, however, it were compulsory for all citizens to vote on the primary and election days, the better, which at all times out-numbers the rough element, would have no difficulty in naming the local, state, and general government officers.

Appealing to their patriotism is in vain ; for what is everyone's business is no one's, and therefore, there is no other resource, or way to obtain a government of the majority than by the simple process of compelling that majority to do its duty. Fines, heavy fines, and, for second and third offences, imprisonment, would soon cause a marked degree of patriotism to arise in the bosom of every citizen.

III

The value of our perishable products represents our actual wealth. This, as we have stated before, we place in round numbers at five billions of dollars, which is a *per capita* of about eighty dollars.

How to keep the *per capita* of eighty dollars as intact as possible is the problem of good legislation. To reduce it causes a proportionate increase of suffering.

If the French can talk an American out of a half-million dollars for a painting, it is a good thing for France, but a loss to this country. It practically means that one of the custodians of our wealth is giving up half a million of dollars of the products of our farms for the privilege of hanging up in a 10x12 room a few strokes of a Frenchman's brush ; and that so long as the

painting is hanging up in our country it represents an actual loss to us of a half million of dollars. On the other hand, if the same amount is paid to an American artist for an American painting, the half million of dollars only changes ownership—and being still here does not represent the loss of a single dollar. The painting can be destroyed by fire or otherwise, and the tax-payers at large will not be out anything. But the French painting destroyed while owned in this country represents a positive loss of the purchase price, and reduces our *per capita* accordingly.

The same can be said about silks and other luxuries; every dollar we pay out for such articles represents a total loss; the article when here may change hands many times at a considerable advance on the first cost of the goods, until it is

worn out or destroyed ; but the price originally paid for the goods to the French is lost.

The case is the same, whatever the nation, consequently, to equalize matters, we must see that the balance of trade is in our favor—not measured by luxuries for necessities, but necessities for necessities, luxuries for luxuries. Therefore—and this is the particular point we wish to call to the attention of financiers—what difference can it possibly make as to the medium of exchange, whether it be based on a gold, silver or paper basis, so long as it represents the value of our perishable product, which we have already proven by statistics to be a *per capita* of eighty dollars. If we use a medium that does not represent the value of our perishable products, we are playing directly into the hands of men who have “bulled” the commodity known as

the precious metal, and "beared" the products known as the necessities, thereby causing the producing circles, and, consequently, their co-laborers, who together constitute the real tax-payers, to suffer in proportion; and that the value of our perishable products, created by the laws of supply and demand, and bearing on the surface an eighty dollar *per capita* valuation, is dishonestly represented as at present by only twenty dollars *per capita*.

IV

Politicians should endeavor to be honest with their following, and, in as plain a manner as possible, waiving everything that has the appearance of vagueness, present their proposition before the jury. The radical difference in the policies of the two great parties on the question

of tariff is such a wide one that *reason* should interfere between the belligerents. For example, an item of vast importance to the Western States is the question as to whether the present tax on Lead should or should not be repealed?

We unhesitatingly answer, it should not, and endeavor to maintain our position by the following reasons: First—If with a tariff an army of Americans can obtain employment, and without such restriction, they would be unemployed, we certainly could not hesitate from a patriotic standpoint? Second—if Mexico receives four million dollars per annum from the United States for the item of Lead, is not the entire amount lost to us? Third—Does it not also compel the army employed in the production of Lead to compete in other fields, say tilling? Does not their competition lessen the value of

farm products ? Fourth—What benefit is derived by the farmer ? Why, it is said, he gets his Lead cheaper. True ; directly he does ; but indirectly he does not, for the entire valuation of the Lead leaves the farmer's jurisdiction not a vestige of the four millions remaining ; whereas, if he paid, say, five millions for the same quantity to his co-laborers, the difference of a million dollars in the price would practically be a subsidy to his own people to refrain from engaging in competition with himself, and the entire five millions would remain in the country and assist, which is the object of co-labor, in developing and thereby civilizing the country, bringing the farmer the result of such civilization equally with his co-worker.

We have to decide as to whether the difference between the Mexican and American price jus-

tifies the compulsion of Americans to compete with their co-laborers in other fields, and *take the chance* that the gross amount we pay the Mexicans will be returned to us for exchange luxuries (the item of buying provisions from us does not count as any purchase of provisions implies a necessity independent of reciprocity) for if they do not return to us the entire amount for exchange luxuries, we are certainly out by the transaction. We must always bear in mind that our population of sixty-two odd millions is still intact, and that any portion of our five billions of dollars that is lost lessens the *per capita*, which must be borne proportionately by all the tax-payers. Is such a result desirable or expedient? Ask the American army of Lead-workers and the accompanying army of other co-laborers, created by and dependent upon the continued employ-

ment of the Lead-working army, which, otherwise, would be thrown back upon our hands.

V

By our faulty legislation the products of each of the States practically now go to the metropolis of the United States, or to the gay European capitals, for the reason that adverse legislation in the way of preventing monied people from enjoying their wealth compels them to seek more agreeable climes—places that know the value of wealth, and cater to it. The outcome of this adverse legislation is that those who have made their money in the Middle and Western States, and whose property is still here, have the income forwarded to them from those States, and enjoy the same either in our metropolis or the European

capitals, where unwise, restrictive, or misguided legislation does not hamper them.

Some States enact prohibitory laws. The result is that these States are drained of their wealth, and the same is spent royally elsewhere in anti-prohibitory amusements. Let us for a change cater to the different elements that constitute human nature, and simply, though we may be cranky on some subjects, let us not for that reason compel others who are more rational or more liberal to think and act according to our notions. Let us make each of our States as great and as good a pleasure resort as is possible. As to those who are fond of squandering their money by practically throwing it away, let them do so ; they think they are having a good time, and they are certainly paying for it in many ways. As regards those who enjoy horse racing,

let them indulge in it to their heart's content. It makes a material difference in the value of Kentucky blue-grass whether a Haggin or a Stanford is in existence or not; that these men have been willing to spend millions of dollars to possess the fastest animal has made many a Kentucky family happier, and the result is to-day that a Kentuckian who can raise a single speedy animal is a wealthy man, occasioned by no other reason than the desire of a fun-loving man of the Haggin or Stanford stripe to gratify his whim. Blue-grass, which was practically valueless before, is now a boon to its possessor—made so, not because of its agricultural value, but entirely upon the grounds of its adaptability to serve the whims of the fun-loving.

The fact of a second or two makes very little difference to the ordinary being, but that it causes

a harmless rivalry between the wealthy, secures an army of people agreeable employment, and raises the value of every farm in the country.

The States that will cater to the fun-loving community are the ones that will be successful in every sense of the word. While most of us, for affecting reasons, might frown down the prospect of a bull-fight in our community, the real feeling would be one of enthusiasm. In fact, we believe that if nine-tenths of our population should be suddenly transferred to Madrid, nearly all could be found at the first advertised bull-fight, enjoying it fully as much as the natives themselves.

As accumulation is a natural result of a barter system, and cannot be prevented, so, too, is the fun-loving element in our nature going to crop out on every opportunity whenever our purses will permit. It is a result of being mortal. Man

is "built that way." You will find that there is very little difference in the composition of a healthy boy and a healthy colt. A boy cannot be serious, let him try never so hard; not even just before or after Sunday-school. You may threaten him with the orthodox hell, but you will find that he is not phased by the "bluff," or "false alarm," and that in the midst of the sermon his thoughts tend more towards "raising" hell than going there. Man is much like a volcano; it is useless to tamper with the crater. Put whatever restrictions you will upon him, he is bound to effervesce every so often; in fact, when he does not, it is a sure sign he is out of sorts and will bear watching.

If the community will only remove a little of the moss that has accumulated over it, and legislate, not to prevent amusements, but to cater to

enjoyment in every possible way, they will remove a gigantic barrier between the bugaboos of the cranks and those who favor the happiness of man as he is made.

VI

Is it any wonder that one hundred millions of dollars crosses the Atlantic yearly, taken by our spendthrifts to avoid the obnoxious laws passed by our pumpkin legislators? They remain here just long enough to draw the profits from our energy and soil, and then go to such places as a Paris, a Vienna, or a London, where the people would rise in their might at even the suggestion of a law to prevent people from spending their own money. So the result of our humbug prohibitory laws, conceived and passed by a lot of cranks and fanatics, is, that the greatest portion



of our surplus must go over to gay foreign capitals whose people cater to its demands, because they have sense enough to know that the greatest boon and blessing rich people can bestow is simply to spend their money.

Therefore, the danger to our country is not from the spendthrifts, but from the cranks, no matter under what colors they may sail,—whether they are known as the dress-reform crank, the prohibitory crank, or the religious crank.

Let us, for a change, throw the throttle wide open and make this uncertain life—short at best,—a life more of pleasure than of pain; let us be gay rather than grave. Let us seek sunshine rather than shadow. And let us go to the mysterious future with the feeling that, if left to the choice of man whether he would

prefer a golden harp and an everlasting future or another short sentence on Earth, he would probably, before settling down with the harp, be just foolish enough to ask for another short bout with planet Earth.

CALIFORNIA

I

Poor, helpless California; richer in varied resources than any other State in the Union, and in consequence better able to withstand the waves of adversity; climate almost perfection; people of, at least, average intelligence; naturally independent by its physical location, which permits of ingress and egress through its magnificent harbor; cereals, fruits, garden products, precious metals, timber, all in superabundance; nature more kind to it than any other State. But withal, how helpless, how enslaved! The State encircled by an octopus which controls its politics; its commerce; its wealth. Not a blade of grass grows that does not contribute to its rapacity; not a golden fruit, ripening under the careful nursing of nature's sun, that does not fall into its lap of desire.

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I

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II

The management of this octopus rules California as does the Czar rule Russia. Everything and everybody must bend to it. Like their Russian prototypes, the people make futile attempts to overthrow its gigantic power ; they use the same secret methods, only differing in their systems by the absence of explosives ; they resort to the clandestine means of anonymous subscriptions, and like stealthy methods, to induce other companies to enter the confines of the State, only to find that each time are they outwitted by a coup d'etat, or, as more properly designated, a sudsidization, which being greater than the merchants' subscription, is more acceptable to the "threatened competition." This incipient rebellion is soon regretted by its promoters, for the octopus retaliates in a worse than

Siberian manner, by compelling the people to pay the subsidization by increased charges.

III

To such an extent has its power grown that it not only almost controls the State's politics, and its products, but also dictates who shall and who shall not do business within its domains. A stranger, no matter how enamored he might be of its climate, is practically prohibited from doing business in the State. He might command the best of credit from the business circles in which he is known, by his reputation of unfailing shrewdness and carefulness in his dealings, but he is restrained from doing business on a basis similar to what would be granted in some of the other States, viz., judging his ability to do business by the resources and physical condition

of his location. The result of a very careful examination is that he cannot engage in business without the consent of the octopus ; he finds that this octopus names those that may do the heavy business of the State ; that the rebate system is the means or instrument employed by it to bar out competition ; that unless he can obtain a permit or a certificate from the octopus to engage in business, it is useless for him to try. On the surface of matters he could get the same rates as others, but in reality is that the case ? Ask some of the merchants of San Francisco.

III

You may say that an Inter-State Commerce Commission exists to prevent such a state of affairs—and to decide all questions of discrimination—with power to punish transgressors. How

can you prove the existence of rebates? Are not the beneficiaries the relatives and friends of the octopus? Do they not receive in return for their loyalty, certificates, or feudal commissions, to do business, which enables them to obtain wealth, position, power? Why don't the injured appeal to the courts? Ahem! That's good. We almost forgot that a remedy was so near at hand. Of course, we would not dare to imply that the courts are not in the hands of the people. But still, courts are composed of lawyers, and lawyers, after all, are only mortal, and, unfortunately for our institutions, subject to the same prevailing weaknesses that afflict members of other trades and professions, to-wit, the fear of power and the love of plenty.

V

It is no secret with the struggling attorney that his day dream is that the next knock on his office door might prove to be from the agent of the octopus. Well he might tremble, and his pulse beat violently, from even the mere thought of such a possibility, for he knows full well the value of such a knock. He knows that it is as effective in its transformation from poverty to power and plenty as was Aladin's lamp magical in its fictional result. Can the struggling attorney vacillate long in choosing between the people and the octopus, when before him stands the agent of the latter tendering him a gown of a Justice? His family and himself are only mortal. He swallows, as best he can, his manhood and nobility, and lays great stress on the chance that the public will never know the terms

of his capitulation. Let a lawyer show signs of a little more than ordinary ability, and he need not remain long on the "outside." Corporations are paying a premium for talent and ability, and all they ask in return for position and gold is an alliance that really means a forfeiture of heart and conscience, and an abject surrender of all sympathy with the people whenever a conflict between the two factions arises.

VI

And of such material are courts liable to be constituted. Gold would permeate their every fibre, and, knowing its power as they recognize it made them, they would make their obeisance to it alone or to its possessor; and the anomaly would be presented of a people seeking justice or damages from corporations by trying their

cases before the corporations' own attorneys or agents sitting as judges, and placed there for no other purpose than to protect the corporations' interests. A decision which could be read upside down or crosswise would give the case to the defendant, the costs to the plaintiff.

VII

It is the octopus whom we must seek for position and power. How nicely has it taken these prerogatives from the hands of the people ; and, withal, how insolent is it in its demands! If you cross it in any way, might it not, like the Czar, issue a ukase, which would practically dissolve the court, and compel the people, by proper manipulation of both political conventions, to elect its attorneys for justices? If, having supposed itself too strongly entrenched to fear

opposition, and having temporarily neglected to attend to the minor details of court and political matters, should awake to find that a court has passed upon the validity of a contract (whether a marriage one or not is unnecessary to state) by which a plebeian is given an equity decision, when it discovers this concession to the people, would it quietly acquiesce? Oh, no; it would simply issue an order demanding the peremptory dissolution of the court, and the election of another that would respect the rights of corporations over the people. The former decision would be reversed, and the current of judicial events would again flow on smoothly in its direction.

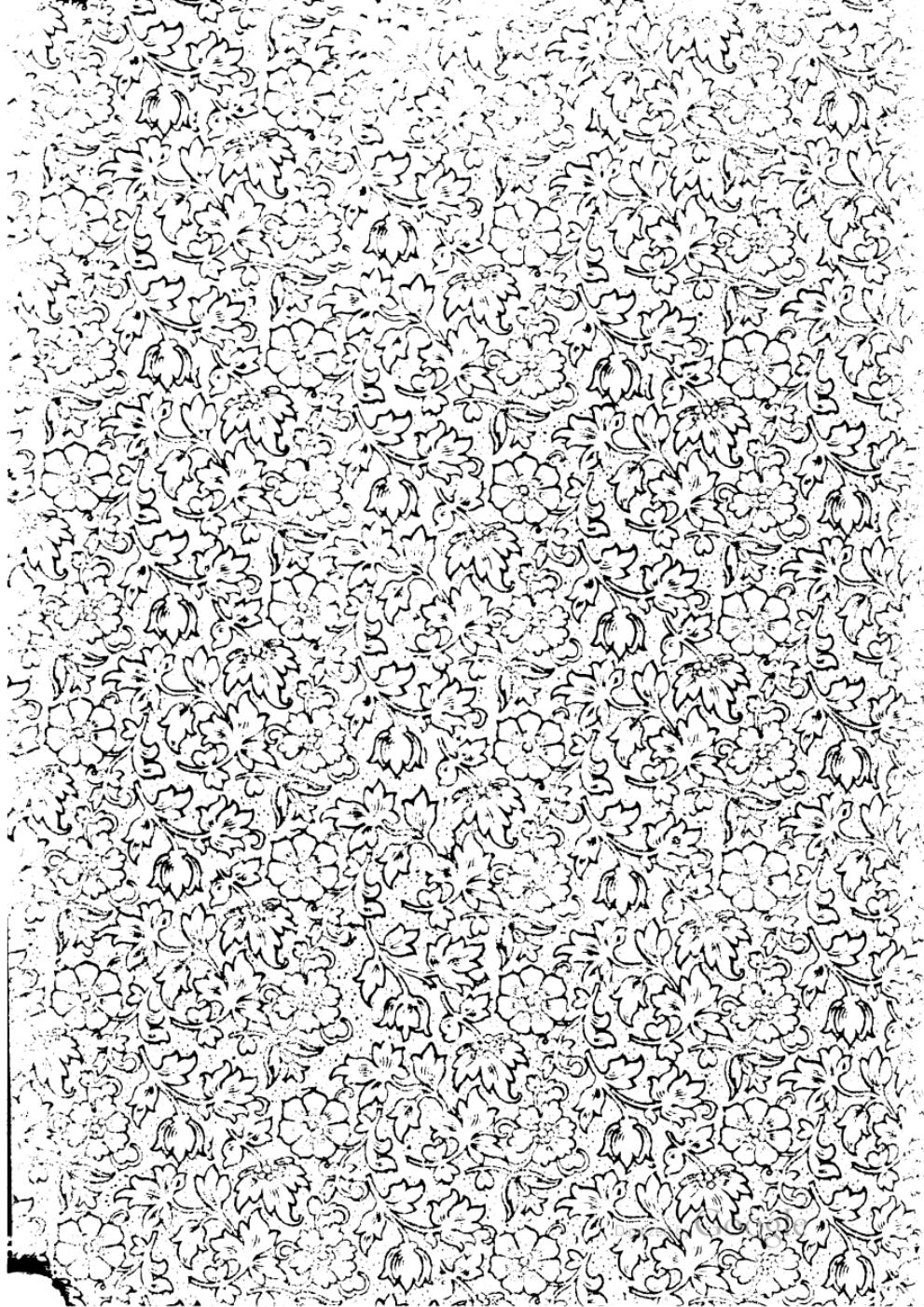
A WESTERN PRAYER

As Lincoln immortalized himself by conferring freedom upon a suffering branch of our human race, let Congress follow his patriotic example, and liberate our mighty West from its bondage of inactivity ; let the fetters of unjust legislation that have held our farmers and miners for nearly a score of years, be broken, and let us be a living witness of the unusual spectacle of some modern Patrick Henry arising in his congressional seat and pleading for once—THE PEOPLES' CAUSE.





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